exercise the right of superintendence in the case of a few Samudayams such as Haripad and Ambalapuzha. Such a step would induce the other Samudayams to put their houses in order in time to escape the clutches of law. He also requested that a list of all the Samoohams in the State with information as to the wealth of each body should be called for and that uniform accounts should be prescribed for their observance. Such accounts should be checked under Section 4 of the Regulation. The above safeguards would, the Member observed, minimise the chances of mismanagement.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's remarks will be referred to the Additional Head Sirkar Vakil for opinion.

156. The establishment of institutions for feeding poor school-children during noon-day interval.

Mr. S. Harihara Iyer B. A. (Member, T. I. C., Attungal) referred to the representation made at the last session of the Assembly on the subject and said that the health of the school-children was so paramount a concern that the subject demanded the serious attention of the Government and the people. Many boys and girls had no food in the noon and that was due in some cases to the midday interval being too short, in other cases to the want of a satisfactory agency to provide food near the school, and in a few others to want of convenience or poverty. The total strength of the Higher Grade Elementary Schools in the State was 53,215 children of whom as many as 21,828 of the boys and girls were without food at noon. That was indeed regrettable and required serious consideration. The children of the Higher Grade Elementary School at West Kallada were being provided with food in the noon by a few philanthropic men of the place. The cost of the food per child per day there was one chuckram. On that basis, out of 28,000 pupils (roughly) who were without food at noon in the whole State, only three-eighths of the number would have to be fed *gratis* at one chuckram per head; and the cost would be Rs. 61,875 per year of 10 working months. To carry out the scheme of supplying food at noon to the children, the co-operation of the Government with the efforts of the people was quite essential. The Member therefore submitted the following proposals for the kind acceptance of the Government:—

(1) The midday interval of one hour in Elementary Schools should be extended to an hour and a half.

(2) Tiffin sheds should be put up in the premises of all schools.

(3) The Inspecting Officers of the Department should be instructed to make suitable arrangements through the agency of the people to give food to such of the school-children as could not go home for food or bring food with them to school in the morning, receiving payment from such as were able to pay.

(4) A contribution in aid of such feeding funds, at least one-third of the total cost, should be promised by the Government subject to such conditions and rules as might be laid down by them for the purpose. The expenditure on account of the above contribution should be met from the savings obtained by the retrenchment or closing of the Oottupurahs and other charitable institutions.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's remarks will be referred to the Director of Public Instruction for report.

157. The present condition of the Hindu Pulayas in the State.

Mr. P. K. Govinda Pillai (Member, Nominated) said that the Pulayas of the State numbered more than two hundred thousands and were scattered all over the country. The one outstanding feature of the community was its ready susceptibility to the proselytising influences of the Christian Mission agencies working ardently in the State. The Pulayas were Hindus by tradition, custom and temperament, and rapid conversion of those Pulayas into the Christian faith was a phenomenon not compatible with the conservatism and pertinacity of the Hindu. The Member did not believe that the cause of such conversions was traceable to any inherent defect in the Hindu religion. But it was entirely due to the unsympathetic attitude of the Hindu polity to the Pulayas who undoubtedly constituted an integral factor of that polity.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

The cause of such conversions was also traceable to the advantages, social and material, accruing to the convert. Although the conversion was really tantamount to but a change of personal designation, the convert felt the superiority of his new Christian name to his old and time-honored appellation by the acquisition of greater personal freedom untramelled by the shackles of social customs and superstitions. The Member, however, conceded that the superstitions of the society could not be entirely disregarded but he pointed out that the Government and its officers had no justification to accentuate the difference between a Hindu Pulaya and the Pulaya convert by invidious distinctions often accorded to them. The Hindu Pulayas still suffered serious public disabilities and they only prayed for the alleviation of those disabilities. The important disabilities were :—

(1) The public roads and ferries in Central Travancore were still forbidden ground to the Pulayas. Stringent orders should be issued to the officers of the Government to facilitate public convenience to the Pulayas also. As regards the ferries, if the people were still unbending in their antagonism to the participation of the advantage of a public ferry boat by the humblest Pulaya, the Member suggested that separate boats should be set apart for Pulayas, whose personal safety was as important as that of any other.

(2) Admission of Pulayas to all Sircar Schools should be enforced Christian Pulayas easily obtained such admission but not the Hindu Pulayas. The Headmasters of schools were mainly responsible for the refusal of admission. The Pulayas were not for disturbing the equanimity or equlibrium of society but they craved for education and they should have it. The difficulties in its way should be removed, and for that purpose, the Government should depute a responsible officer to investigate into the existing difficulties of the Pulayas in the matter of education. That officer should possess ample powers to enforce admission of Pulaya students wherever possible and should open new schools for Pulayas wherever necessary.

(3) The Police and the Magistracy were not sufficiently sympathetic to the Pulayas. The Member referred to the violence offered to a Pulaya meeting at Kazhakuttam and said that the trouble on the occasion was due to the want of promptitude on the part of the local Police to prevent any violence. The criminal complaint preferred by the Pulayas was unfortunately thrown out and, since then, the Pulayas had a feeling of public insecurity, and the unscrupulous rowdies in the neighbourhood of Pulaya habitations exhibited an audacious disregard of the members of that community.

(4) The Pulayas should be shown greater consideration in the matter of medical relief. The Native Vaidyasalas were closed to them. That should not be tolerated. Separate wards for the Pulayas, and Pulaya attendants, should be sanctioned in all hospitals.

(5) The Pulaya was a landless labourer, dependent on the bounties of others. His economic condition was deplorable. He had practically nothing to claim as his own. The Member therefore urged upon the Government to give a final shape to their policy of assigning Sircar lands to the Pulayas. The assignment of 500 acres of land in the Vilappil *pakuthi*, ordered several years ago in pursuance of that policy, was not yet completed. He requested that the matter should be expedited. He added that, in all subsequent registries of lands in the names of persons other than Pulayas, the Government should stipulate that, if the registry-holders of such lands failed to cultivate the lands for 12 years, the registry would be cancelled, and that those lands should be registered in the names of the Pulayas. He also requested that bunds of paddy lands and other *porambokes* should be registered in the names of Pulayas, and that 400 acres of land available for registry near the Anathazhchira in the Trivandrum taluk should be assigned to them.

(6) He referred to the plea set up by certain members of the Assembly for special electorates and said that, if any community stood in need of such an electorate, it was pre-eminently the Pulaya community. The representation of the community was utterly inadequate and should be improved. There were 126 Associations or *Sanghoms* of the Pulayas in the State and the member advocated the establishment of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

such an electorate as would secure at least one Member for the community in each Division. He contended that, if the question of the percentage of the Pulayas to the entire population of the State be considered, they were entitled to a better representation in the Assembly. The community, however, desired only for a reasonable representation.

In conclusion, the Member pointed out the utter helplessness of the Hindu Pulayas. They had no benefactor, no patron, no organisation, no fund. They were Hindus to the core, but they were still outcaste and untouchable. Their only salvation lay in conversion, which effected their social emancipation. That was a contingency which should be avoided in a Hindu State like Travancore. He therefore appealed to the Government to remove the disabilities of the community and emancipate it from social injustice and degradation.

Dewan's reply.—The several suggestions of the Member will be considered.

158. The removal of the obstacles encountered by the Pulayas in securing permanent habitation.

Mr. Ayan Kali (Member, Nominated) said that the Members of his community were mostly dependent on other classes of people. Few had lands of their own, and their dependence on others even for a bare plot of ground to stay was a source of grave apprehension to the community as to their future well-being and security. The Government had recognised their situation and as a result of such recognition sanctioned the assignment of 500 acres of land to the Pulayas in the Vilappil *pakuthi*. That was 4 or 5 years ago. The assignment was not yet complete. The Member requested that orders should be issued for the registry of the lands in question at a very early date.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

159. The need for establishing a Bank, either Government or Private, at Trivandrum.

Mr. T. N. Motha (Member, Trading Classes, Trivandrum) said that the commercial activity of Trivandrum had become so much that the want of a Bank was seriously felt by the people. The importance of the town would increase with the completion of the Quilon-Trivandrum Railway and the Valiathoray Pier. The absence of a Bank having relations with all important centres affected the progress of commerce, especially foreign commerce. He pointed out that the transactions of the local Bankers called Hundi Merchants were not so wide nor was their credit so largely accepted as to be a good substitute for a Metropolitan Bank like the Bank of Madras. The Madras Bank would open a branch in Trivandrum only if the Government encouraged them by offering a guarantee. In the interests of the commerce of the city, the Member requested that either a good Bank should be invited to open a branch or the Government itself should undertake the starting of a Bank in the town.

Mr. P. John Mathew (Member, Trading Classes, Alleppey) said that the Hundi Merchants, found in almost all parts of the country, gave out money and paddy at an usurious rate of interest and proved very often to be the cause of the ruin of merchants and agriculturists. The necessity of a State Bank was therefore keenly felt. At the commencement of the war, there was a financial crisis at Alleppey, since the Bank took back all the sovereigns and rupees and, as a consequence, copper coins alone were left in the market in plenty. The recurrence of such financial disasters could be prevented only by the establishment of a State Bank. The Member also referred to the enormous loss sustained by Travancore on the collapse of Arbuthnot & Co., and observed that such losses were incidental to the absence of reliable Banks in the State. He also adverted to the Mysore State Bank and requested that the Government should set about the creation of a State Bank by utilising a portion of the immense amount of money lying idle in temples or a

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